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Paper No. 13

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JUN 07 2004

OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of :
Edge et al. :
Application No. 09/778,515 : DECISION DISMISSING
Filed: 7 February, 2001 : PETITION
Atty Docket No. 10256US01 :

This is a decision on the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3), filed on 20 February, 2003, to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 35 U.S.C. § 120 for the benefit of prior-filed nonprovisional Application No. 09/631,312, filed on 3 August, 2000.

The petition is **DISMISSED**.

A petition for acceptance of a claim for late priority under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) is only applicable to those applications filed on or after 29 November, 2000. Further, the petition is appropriate only after the expiration of the period specified in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii). In addition, the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) must be accompanied by:

(1) the reference required by 35 U.S.C. § 120 and 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(i) of the prior-filed application, unless previously submitted;¹

¹Any nonprovisional application or international application designated the United States of America claiming the benefit of one or more prior-filed copending applications or international applications designated the United States of America must contain or be amended to contain a reference (amendment to the first line of the specification following the title or in an application data sheet (ADS)) to each such prior-filed application, identifying it by application number (consisting of the series code and serial number) or international application number and indicating the relationship of the applications. Cross references to other related applications may

(2) the surcharge set forth in § 1.17(t); and

(3) a statement that the entire delay between the date the claim was due under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii) and the date the claim was filed was unintentional. The Commissioner may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional.

The instant pending application was filed on 7 February, 2001, and was pending at the time of filing the instant petition. A reference to the above-noted, prior-filed nonprovisional application has been included in an amendment to the first sentence of the specification following the title which was filed concurrently with the instant petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3).

The reference to the above-noted, prior-filed nonprovisional application was not included in the manner specified in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii) (i.e., in an ADS or in an amendment to the first sentence following the title of the specification) or filed within the period specified in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii).

A reference to add the above-noted, prior-filed application on page one following the first sentence of the specification has been included in an amendment filed on 25 November, 2003. However, the amendment is not acceptable as drafted since it improperly incorporates by reference the prior application. Petitioner's attention is directed to Dart Industries v. Banner, 636 F.2d 684, 207 USPQ 273 (C.A.D.C. 1980) where the court drew a distinction between a permissible 35 U.S.C. § 120 statement and the impermissible introduction of new matter by way of incorporation by reference in a 35 U.S.C. § 120 statement. The court specifically stated:

Section 120 merely provides mechanism whereby an application becomes entitled to benefit of the filing date of an earlier application disclosing the same subject matter. Common subject matter must be disclosed, in both applications, either specifically or by an express incorporation-by-reference of prior disclosed subject matter. Nothing in section 120 itself operates to carry forward any disclosure from an earlier application. In re de Seversky, *supra* at 674, 177 USPQ at 146-147. Section 120 contains no magical

disclosure-augmenting powers able to piece new matter barriers. It cannot, therefore, "limit" the absolute and express prohibition against new matter contained in section 251.

Accordingly, before the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) can be granted, a substitute amendment deleting the incorporation by reference statement is required.

In order to expedite consideration, petitioner may wish to submit the substitute amendment by facsimile to the number indicated below and to the attention of Senior Petitions Attorney Douglas I. Wood.

Further correspondence with respect to this matter should be addressed as follows:

By mail: Mail Stop Petition
 Commissioner for Patents
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By FAX: (703) 872-9306
 Attn: Office of Petitions

By hand: U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
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The application is being forwarded to Technology Center 2600 for further processing.

Telephone inquiries should be directed to Senior Petitions Attorney Douglas I. Wood at 703-308-6918.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles A. Pearson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Charles A. Pearson
Director, Office of Petitions